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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 26 March 1993, at 4.30 p.m.

President:	Mr. O'BRIEN	(New Zealand)
Members:	Brazil	Mr. SARDENBERG
	Cape Verde	Mr. BARBOSA
	China	Mr. CHEN Jian
	Djibouti	Mr. DORANI
	France	Mr. LADSOUS
	Hungary	Mr. ERDOS
	Japan	Mr. HATANO
	Morocco	Mr. SNOUSSI
	Pakistan	Mr. MARKER
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	Spain	Mr. PEDAUYE
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. RICHARDSON
	United States of America	Ms. ALBRIGHT
	Venezuela	Mr. BIVERO

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The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN LIBERIA

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE QUESTION OF LIBERIA (S/25402)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Liberia in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Baccus Matthews, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Interim Government of Liberia, and invite him to take a place at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Gabriel Baccus Matthews (Liberia) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the question of Liberia, document S/25402.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/25469, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

(The President)

I should like to draw the attention of members to the following revision to the draft resolution contained in document S/25469: in the last preambular paragraph, the words "in West Africa as a whole" should be replaced by the words "in this region of West Africa".

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it, as orally revised. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that that is the case.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Before putting the draft resolution to the vote, I shall call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. BARBOSA (Cape Verde): On 19 November 1992, with the adoption of Security Council resolution 788 (1992), this Council, in close cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), took an important step towards promoting an agreed, peaceful solution to the conflict in Liberia. Four months later, this joint effort has already achieved results that allow us to see light at the end of the tunnel.

In this context, my delegation welcomes the Secretary General's appointment of Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers as his Special Representative, and supports the efforts that made possible the presentation of the last report on the situation in Liberia.

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

Despite the commendable efforts of the ECOWAS countries to assist in achieving a political solution to the conflict and to bring about political stability in Liberia, negotiations have not yet prevailed against the language of arms, which we deeply regret. We call on the parties to this senseless and fratricidal conflict to put a stop to this irrational use of violence and to settle their differences through peaceful means.

In this connection, we reiterate the imperative need of all countries fully to respect the mandatory arms embargo imposed by Security Council resolution 788 (1992) and reaffirmed in the draft resolution we are about to adopt.

Taking into account the level of mistrust among the various parties, the delegation of Cape Verde is of the view that ways and means must be sought to promote the necessary confidence among the parties to the conflict and to bring them back to the negotiation table. In particular, we feel that the time has come for a meaningful involvement by the United Nations, in close cooperation with ECOWAS, in the process of promoting the restoration of conditions of peace and stability in Liberia.

In this regard, the draft resolution before the Council addresses the possibility of sending United Nations observers to Liberia in the context of the cessation of hostilities, which would be followed by the immediate encampment, disarmament and demobilization of the parties to the conflict.

Moreover, my delegation would like to express its support for the provision that requests the Secretary-General to consider the possibility of convening a meeting of the President of the Interim Government of National Unity and the warring factions, within the framework of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. I am certain that this will constitute a major step in the search for

(Mr. Barbosa, Cape Verde)

practical means that could contribute to creating an environment that favours a renewed commitment by the parties to the conflict to the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Accords, in particular of its provisions concerning the encampment and disarmament of their forces.

We believe that this step will eventually lead to a long-lasting solution to the conflict in Liberia and to the restoration of peace and stability throughout the West African subregion. We urge the international community to lend its full support to this valuable initiative.

Finally, my delegation commends the efforts by Member States, the United Nations system and humanitarian organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to the suffering people of Liberia and, at the same time, issues a broad appeal to the international community to increase its assistance to the Liberian people. We hope that, once peace has returned to this country, the entire international community will respond positively to the major challenge of the reconstruction and development of Liberia.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/25469, as orally revised.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour: Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Djibouti, France, Hungary, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution, as orally revised, has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 813 (1993).

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): The tragic conflict that continues to afflict Liberia, depriving a large part of its people of the most basic means of a decent life, is a matter of grave concern. Liberia, like Brazil, is a founding member of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, whose main objectives are the consolidation of peace and the enhancement of intraregional links of friendship, understanding and cooperation among countries on both shores of the South Atlantic. As expected, that regional mechanism has not failed to express, through the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, its preoccupation over the situation and its hope that the regional and international efforts aimed at the peaceful settlement of the Liberian conflict can lead to the much needed and long-overdue attainment of national reconciliation and reconstruction in that country.

Echoing the report of the Secretary-General dated 12 March 1993, as well as previous decisions of the Security Council on the question of Liberia, my delegation commends the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its laborious efforts, often under very strenuous conditions, aimed at restoring peace to that country, more recently through the proposed revitalization of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord of 30 October 1991.

We also take this opportunity to express our recognition to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers, for his determined contribution to the quest for peace in Liberia.

Brazil firmly believes in the desirability and usefulness of maintaining a close dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations and appropriate regional organizations in the settlement of disputes in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. We support the idea of strenghtening the cooperative relationship established between the United Nations and ECOWAS

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

with a view to assisting that regional body in effectively fulfilling its endeavours with regard to Liberia, as put forward by the Secretary-General in his report, while stressing that the ultimate responsibility rests with the Liberian people themselves. In this sense, we welcome the adoption by the Security Council of today's resolution.

The situation in Liberia unfortunately resembles other issues placed before the Security Council: a breakdown of law and order, followed by the eruption of a major internal conflict; a high number of casualties, particularly among civilians; and huge flows of refugees and displaced persons, a serious humanitarian crisis. The Council knows all too well this dreadful pattern. Let us hope that the efforts of ECOWAS, with the full support of the United Nations, will bear fruit so that Liberia may soon be able to depart from such a disastrous path.

Ms. ALBRIGHT (United States of America): We would like to thank the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, Mr. Gordon-Somers, and their staff for the thoughtful report, into which they put so much effort.

Also, the United States is gratified by the adoption of this resolution, which further strengthens the relationship between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional body which has taken the laudable initiative to address a regional conflict.

As the United Nations strives to meet the demands placed upon it by a contentious world in a time of shrinking resources, such cooperation will be vital, and more and more, we will have to look to regional actors for guidance and support.

The search for peace is seldom smooth, rarely quick and never cheap. The cost of abandoning the search, however, is even greater. In more than 20

(Ms. Albright, United States)

meetings on Liberia over the past three years, ECOMAS has patiently and skilfully crafted a durable regional consensus and identified the essential components for a lasting solution in Liberia. If the ECOMAS initiative in Liberia fails, the ultimate cost to the region and to the international community will be great. The efforts of ECOMAS are worthy of greater international support, and we urge all Members of the United Nations to assist ECOWAS in this endeavour.

(Ms. Albright, United States)

We support Special Representive Gordon-Somers's continuing efforts to arrange a cease-fire and simultaneous implementation of the Yamoussoukro agreement, calling for encampment and disarmament of Liberian combatants, followed by democratic elections in Liberia.

We urge all warring factions to reaffirm their commitment to implementing the Yamoussoukro agreement and to accept the fact that cooperation is the only viable alternative. The continued application of sanctions can help bring about a cessation of hostilities. The Secretary-General's offer to provide technical assistance to the ECOMAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in monitoring sanctions should be accepted. The United Nations can serve as a valuable catalyst to help the ECOMAS peace-keeping effort succeed.

The suggestion in the Secretary-General's report for a limited number of United Nations observers to take up positions alongside ECOMOG merits serious consideration. Such United Nations observers could provide an important guarantee that the disarmament process will be conducted fairly and in a manner that offers advantage to none of the warring factions. Moreover, such observers would provide a further assurance that the political process leading to free and fair elections will take place in strict accordance with international norms.

The United States has provided well over $200 million in humanitarian assitance and $28 million to support the ECOMAS peace process. We are prepared to assist with repatriation and with the holding of free and fair elections when conditions permit.

(Ms. Albright, United States)

We call on all the factions in Liberia and on ECOMOG to cooperate fully with United Nations representatives to ensure that relief supplies reach all parts of the country. We urge other members of the international community to step up their support for the Secretary-General's current appeal for humanitarian assistance to fill the current funding gap.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): My Government is concerned about the deterioration of the situation in Liberia and about the failure of the parties to the conflict to respect and implement the various accords, in particular the Yamoussoukro Accord. The statement by President Sawyer on 22 March, concerning occupation of territories formerly occupied by General Taylor's forces and now by various other factions, is also a source of concern to my delegation.

I believe the United Nations should continue to support the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with a view to securing the peace and stability of the region and to implementing the relevant accords, in close coordination with the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Further efforts should be made to promote peace talks and the political-reconciliation process. I hope that a summit-level meeting of ECOWAS will take place on the Liberian issue and that the Secretary-General will positively consider convening a meeting between the President of the Interim Government and the warring factions.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Interim Government of Liberia has asked to make a statement, and I invite him to do so now.

Mr. MATHEWS (Liberia): We wish to thank members of the Security Council for the resolution just adopted unanimously, which reinforces resolution 788 (1992) of 19 November 1992. We are pleased to note that since its adoption resolution 788 (1992) has had a positive impact on the prospects for peace in Liberia.

Our thanks go also to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his appointment and dispatch of Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers as his Special Representative to Liberia. We welcome the Secretary-General's report and wish to thank him for his painstaking effort in developing an appreciable understanding of the complexity of the Liberian conflict. The Secretary-General's observations, to the effect that the United Nations should continue to play a role supportive of the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), are viewed as practical and prudent. United Nations support for the subregional initiative will enable all Liberians, working with ECOWAS, to restore peace, security and stability to our country.

We note with appreciation the call of the Council for increased humanitarian assistance to our country. While we thank all Member States that have contributed to helping us during this critical hour, we appeal to others for even more generous assistance so that the funding shortfall of $57 million referred to in the Secretary-General's report can be covered.

We pledge our continuing support for and full cooperation with ECOWAS and the United Nations in their manifold endeavours to assist the people of Liberia in our hour of crisis. From our vantage point, we will continue to encourage Liberians to find common ground on the basis of which we can rescue our country from the scourge of war.

The PRESIDENT: There are no further speakers on the list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.